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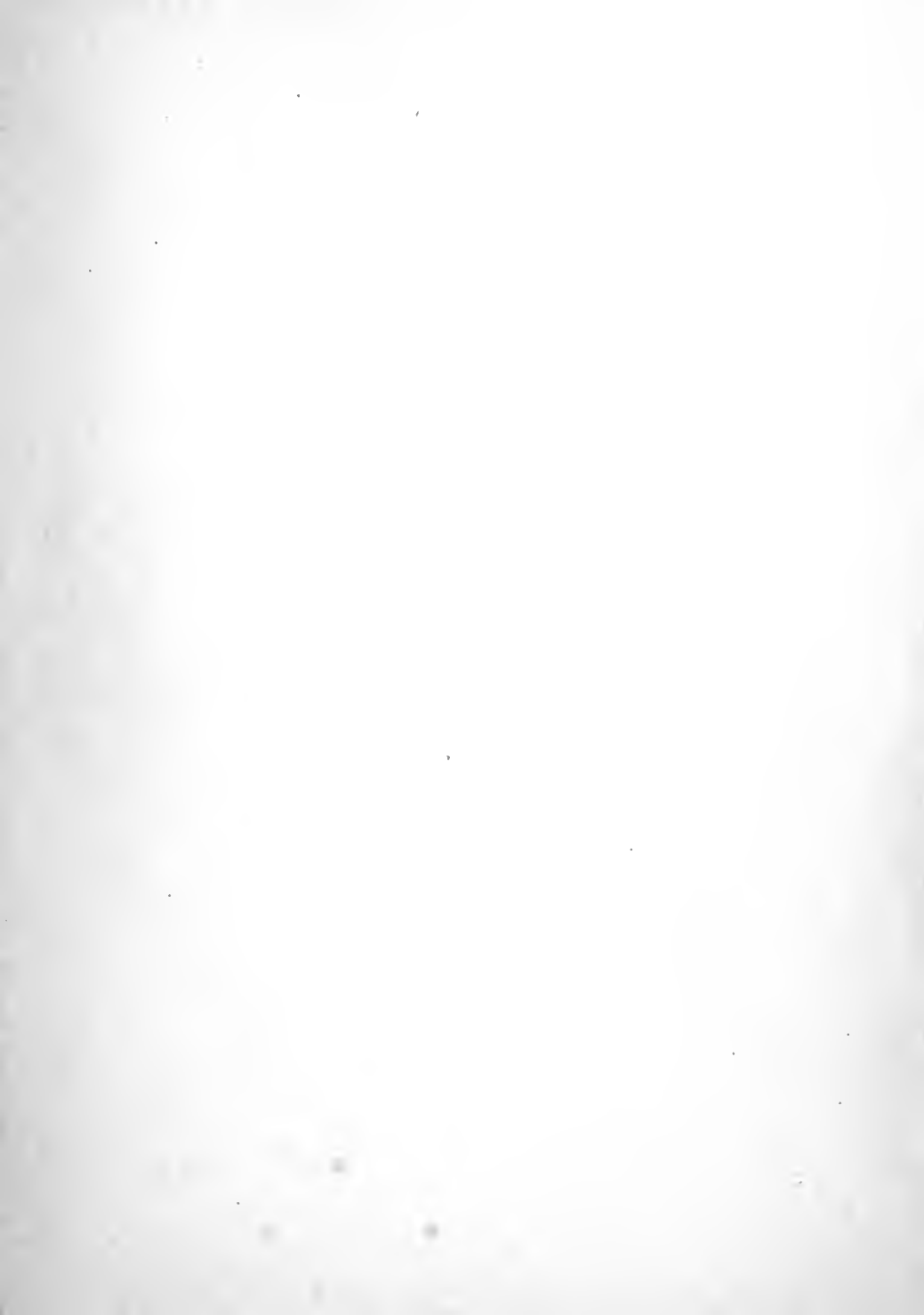
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KATRINJE



A TALE OF
THE LONG AGO

J. RUSSELL MOWRIS



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A TALE OF THE LONG AGO

BY

J. RUSSELL MOWRIS



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THE OLD LIME ROAD

KATRINJE

THE CHRISTENING

Where the Rondout winds its way,
Like a serpent in its play,
Twisting through the reeds and brakes,
Till a larger form it takes;
Joined by other streams along
With the music of their song,
Sometimes swift and sometimes slow;
Like an arrow from the bow;
Or, now, curling, twirling, go
Crystal waters in their flow!
Where the river's grace grows strong,
Where it sings its sweetest song,
Where the Catskills stretch their feet
Till the Shawangunk hills they meet,
Seventeen miles from old King's-town—
Where good Dutch folk settled down—
There, like child o'er-tired with play,
As on mother's breast it lay,
Drinking in that purest rest
Such as angels give the blest;
So the little hamlet seemed,
For its face with beauty beamed.
Fairest far of all its race,
Sweet "Accord" they named the place.

EARLY DAYS

'Twas here, so many years before,
When known as simply "Rochester"—
That patent name, by English Crown,
In seventeen three, was first set down;
Including then much more domain
Than now that township's bounds contain.

Far back, in sixteen seventy-seven,
A deed to England had been given,
By Sewakenamo, Sachem
Of Katatawis—best of them
Who, as Esopus Indian chiefs,
Sought to o'ercome the lingering griefs
Attendant on that earlier day,
When Wildwijk and Kahanesing lay
In ruins, by the murderous hands
Of Tory and of Indian bands.
Then, Shawangunk, too, beyond the crest
Of mountain, had been like distressed.
But that, in sixteen sixty-three,
Would soon be ancient history.
So, now, the settlers, well assured
That all worst things had been endured,
With larger faith and stronger heart,
Made living there their chief fine art!
And, while at "Kerck Wawarssinck", they
Were met with God to praise and pray,

Their powder dry and guns in sight,
They watched, prepared as well, to fight.

For years, maintained on Deyo's Hill,
A fort, long garrisoned, was still

In evidence—even as late
As eighteen hundred sixty-eight.

A relic, then, of former times
When psalm of life, unset to rhymes,

Had oft a broken melody
And singing bullets set the key.

In Rochester and Wawarssinck,
Or far beyond as one might think,
More pleasant place could not well be
Than right here! "Just the place for me!"

Captain Joachim Schoonmaker said:
And here he planned his own homestead.

Nature, to him, through loving eyes,
Revealed her heart—a Paradise!

And many generations rose
To bless that which his wisdom chose;

And many yet, in later age,
Will count it "goodly heritage."

What wonder then, that there should be
Where staunchly grew the great roof-tree,

With roots so deep and branches high
It seemed to wed to earth the sky;

While wide-extending arms o'erspread
With safety, peace and love, 'tis said;

With meat and drink abundant share
To guest, as well as owner, there!

The stealthy foot in moccasin,
On friendship bent, oft came within
To bear the news of some exploit
Of cunning scheme or skill adroit
Of routing wolves or trapping bear;
And, always with some part to spare,
Red-skin brought trophies of the chase
To prove to Pale-face his heart's grace.

Thus compact, signed by life sincere,
Made faith more sure each added year;
And each day's setting sun betold
A richer wealth by far than gold
Piled up in coin or garnered grain
That one could count his earthly gain;
For sire's best legacy to youth
Was just the simple life of truth!

By patent grant, these lands had come
To early settlers, seeking home;
And large estates lay side by side,
With acres stretching hundreds wide.
So parents oft gave children part
Of their ancestral lands, as start
To make their independent way—
A dowry for their wedding-day!

Rare neighbors were these families;
Each trading work to give more ease
To gathering grain, when crops were big
Or, even sticking of a pig.
If unexpected company
Should happen, some day, suddenly
To come; their own men having gone
To town, with stuff to sell; or, drawn
On "jury duty," had to stay
In town all night; or be away
In that big mountain pasture-lot,
To see the fence had no weak spot,
Before they turned the young stock in.
Those creatures soon got wild as sin!
It was a sight to feast the eyes
When, coming on them by surprise,
With deer and fawns they ran a race
From some sequestered drinking-place!
When acorns and the beech-nuts grew
In plenty, hogs were turned in, too.
Sometimes, at night, a pig's shrill squeal
Or calf's loud bawl would make one feel
A chill; for everybody knew
What hungry wolves and panthers do!
Then to the Stokes house, 'gainst the hill,
Near by where runs the Stony-kill,
Where Log-town road leads to the Clove,
With flint-locks loaded, on they drove;

Past where Awosting Falls displays
It's beauty, in it's rainbow sprays,
When first the sun creeps up the sides
Of cliffs where Minnewaska hides;
Or by the trail where Mohonk Lake
Reflects its rocky shores, which make
Deep caverns, where ofttimes a bear,
Or wolf, or panther had its lair.
And scattered round among the stones,
Were lots of gnawed-off, whitened bones.
They went—a dozen, more or less;
And each man ached with eagerness,
In hopes to reach the place of fray
Before the "varmints" got away.
For soon as blood was on the air,
The old beasts brought their young ones there;
And while the feast was at its height,
The hunters let their flint-locks bite.
So most homes had a rug or more,
Or coat, or robe, some beast once wore.

KATRINJE

Of gallant youths and maidens fair
The country had its goodly share;
But none more comely could be found,
In all that countryside around,
Than one whose grace adorned the name
“Katrinje Schoonmaker”—the same
In heaven and earth; for God well knew
He need not wait to call her through
The pearly gates, at any time—
Her life—so simple, yet sublime!
Her face shone forth a heavenly light
Which told the world her soul was white;
Her tender touch cast such a spell
That sick folk soon grew strong and well;
And those who’d felt the blight of sin
Were sure they’d let an angel in,
When, as by chance, she passed their way
And merely spoke the time of day!
For Sharon’s rose, with fragrance sweet,
Filled all her world with heaven complete.

PETRIUS

Of lovers, more than tongue could tell;
But only one, who knew right well
That every impulse of her heart
Formed of his own a sacred part!
Petrius van der Marcken—he
So much her true affinity
That, whether she thought “yea” or “nay,”
His mind was just the same alway!
As stalwart as some giant oak,
On which oft storms their vengeance broke;
Yet left upon the passing scene
The giant undisturbed, serene.
Thus Petrius; so strong, so good—
A monarch, in his realm, he stood!
A heart to laugh, a voice to sing,
Yet ruled, as every inch a king!
He turned the glebe and sowed the grain;
Rich harvests followed sun and rain:
Barns filled so full, and coffers, too,
Want seemed forever lost to view!
With his delight it was to share
And all who needed, anywhere.

LOVE'S ECHOES

The woodman's ax rang clear and shrill
With echoed song from distant hill;

And every stroke rehearsed its part
In some sweet symphony of heart;

While husking-bees and singing-schools
Had indicated all the rules,

By which a young man might proclaim
His right to change a maiden's name.

Katrinje, too, was not remiss
In publishing that she was his.

The radiance of her sweetest smile
Bespoke her constant joy meanwhile.

"And now," the gossips said, "there'll be
A wedding grand, most certainly!"

And sure enough! They watched the signs
And plainly read between the lines;

While all about, the countryside
Hailed with delight the future bride;

And, as the Captain's grandchild came,
Spoke tenderly the maiden's name.

THE HOUSE THAT WAS A HOME

Their fathers' farms together lay,
And measured miles, in either way.
A hundred acres from each side
Were parents' gifts to groom and bride;
And where farms joined, it had been planned
To build the best house in the land!
So rocks and stones were heaped up high,
Where deep foundations were to lie;
And massive walls, like battlements,
Opposing Nature's elements,
Grew large, upon a sightly hill,
Where Heaven it's glory loved to spill.
The gables stood due east and west;
Each topped with chimney, from whose breast
Glowed hospitality and cheer,
When wintry winds wailed loud and drear;
And, in the blackness of the night,
Oft vagrant sparks would leap in flight,
Like shooting stars, to chase away
The goblins, ere the break of day.

The hall stretched through, from side to side;
Its Dutch divided-doors flung wide
Upon an apple-orchard, north;
Where feathered songsters, bursting forth
In rapture, sang; while honey-bees
Buzzed in the blossoms of the trees,

Humming their songs of glad content—
Their thanks for sweets the blossoms lent.
And to the south, the other door
Revealed what might have been before,
A bit of Paradise, well gained
Ere Sin had marked it "lost" or "stained."

THE GARDEN

A rustic arch, o'er which was flung
A climbing bush, where roses hung;
As if, in redolent delight,
Their perfumed breath sought to unite
An atmosphere of pleasing grace
With beauty of a pretty face!

Within, the paths all edged with box,
Made bordered beds for pansies, phlox,
Narcissus, marigolds—all mixed—
'Twould seem that Nature's hand had fixed
The color-blending of their flower
As for a queen's reception-bower!
And, farther on, the hollyhocks
Half-hid the corn, with tasseled stalks;
While sweet-peas set their flowering screens
Where other peas ran race with beans;
Sweet-Williams gallantly stood guard
Where lettuce, radish and Swiss chard,
Potato and tomato, too,
Were on parade, for dress review.
Gay cock's-combs blushed their deepest reds
And slightly turned away their heads
From where the lady-slippers stood.
What modesty! A joke, too good!
And there, beyond the lilac-bush,
The rhubarb, with a gentle push,

Ran up its stalk and spread its leaf—
So glad that spring-time brought relief!

The four-o'clocks, with half-shut eyes,
Murmur their evening Angelus;

While lavender and mint dispense
Their spicy odors for incense;

And poppies throw their bright-hued spread
Above the portulaccas' bed;

And all the while, the big sun-flowers
Have marked the passing of the hours;

Till Nicotine, from edge of night,
Flings out her beauteous stars of white;

Which, with the stars of Heaven above,
Breathe fragrant message, "God is Love."

“MAMMY-JEN”

“O Lor’ sakes, Chile! Don’ nevah say
How’s you c’n live one single day
’Thout dis yere ol’ mammy o’ yourn—
Who’s nussed yer evah sence you’m born!
In cours’, I want ter live wi’ you—
W’at other place on earth ’u’d do
Fer dis yere ol’ black mammy yere,
D’ye ’spect? No, don’ you nevah fear!
My Honey! dat place *whar’ am you—*
Right dar’ mus’ be *whar’ I is, too!*
Sure, I go wi’ you an’ Marse Pete!
An’ nevah will I lif’ my feet
Evah ter go away f’om you;
Till angels come de glory fru,
An’ call dis yere ol’ mammy home
Ter git things fixed fer when *you* come!”

Could ever language more express
Than when hearts speak? No need to guess!
At meaning! ’Twas not so o’er-laid
With wordy rubbish, so well said.
That Truth—all stifled far beneath—
Was dead; because it could not breathe!
Ah, Mammy-Jen, a whiter heart
Ne’er pumped blood more red, for its part

In making of the best mankind—
Though blacker face one ne'er could find
Than yours; which beamed its glory bright
Like noon-day from a deep mid-night!
No need of Proclamation's word,
Nor battle-smoke, nor fire, nor sword
To make you free! Although a slave,
You took such place as master gave,
Like other thousands, south and north.
Where love and truth set seal of worth
Upon Humanity as God's,
'Twas not a question of the bloods
Which mark the difference of race
In minds and features of the face!
The *kind of heart strings* and *their length*—
The institution and the strength
By which mankind is bound or freed—
A greater thing than Law or Creed!

Such bonds were yours, dear Mammy-Jen,
As real, true motherhood had been!
While wrapping round your own off-spring
Your heart of love and sheltering wing,
You wove into your service rare
Such comfort for white babies there
That all distinctions, through that love,
Were lost entirely! God above

Well knew that, should the nestlings need,
You'd be full equal to the deed

Of shredding from your heart the strings
And yet more widely spread your wings

To make secure the nest where they,
In bondage of your love, might lay

Their heads against the breast where beat
The heart e'en Death could not defeat!

So, Mammy-Jen's dear, old, black face
And willing hand had old-time place

In the new home. Her loving heart
Continued in its heavenly art

Of living life, in simple touch,
Interpreting Christ's "Inasmuch."

SLAVERY DAYS

Phoebe, own child of Mammy-Jen,
And other women slaves, from ten
To twenty—often more, than less—
Were part of place and premises
Where Miss Katrinje had been born.
And always, from that very morn,
Beloved by them, she loved them, too!
Now, married she—what should they do?
For her to pass from their life's scene,
At once a question it had been
As to how many there should be
Of these old servants who should see
Continuance with "Missus Kate"
In her new home. So Phoebe's state
Of daughterhood to Mammy-Jen—
Waiting-maid and playmate had been
Throughout the early years; and now,
She found her place just where and how
One might expect. Then, Lindy, who
With Chloe, composed the kitchen crew,
Made working household quite complete
For "Missie Deah" and "Marsa Pete."

There too, had been men slaves, like Ben,
And Tom, and Jake, and Mark; who, when
The master, years before, gave land
With freedom and with home, each planned
To settle there in New York State.
There some had lived till, time grown late,
They fell asleep; and daisies hide
Where now their forms rest side by side.
And, over near the edge of wood,
The grave, which sealed the widowhood
Of Mammy-Jen, raised its low bed
To pillow Jedidiah's head.
Some others, by adventure stirred,
Joined negro friends, from whom they'd heard
Of Amherstburgh, "across the line"
In Canada. And there, in fine,
They found a refuge—one free town
Where blacks could not be hunted down!
For it must here be understood
That all masters were not so good
As to grant freedom to their slaves;
In north, as well as south, white knaves
Sought gains in bartering human flesh;
And some fair price ne'er slipped the mesh
Of their tight fingers' grasping greed,
Nor stayed the pace of bargains' speed.
So, often when oppression sore
Made living worse than death, blacks bore

To Canada, from everywhere,
A common weal or woe to share.
By stealth, they took uncertain flight
Through woods; or, covered by the night,
Were spirited on their dark way
And held in friendly homes by day.
Poor fugitives, whose masters claimed
Each pound of their black flesh, though maimed
By cruel lash or blood-hounds' teeth;
Or faint, the wintry storm beneath!

For this free land, which from its birth
Had beckoned to the ends of earth
A welcome to the world's oppressed,
To set its seal upon distressed
Humanity's bondage to men
And ransom for return again.
Should any slave slip off the coils
Which held him as another's spoils,
To us seems now a fairy tale,
Fit only Hades to regale!

There's scarce one left who can recall
The awfulness, distress and all
The misery of that woful time
When slave-hunting was in its prime!

THE WEDDING

It was the month of roses—June;
All Nature was in true attune

With that great universal theme
Which once made Eden lovelier seem;

For next to love of God in Heaven
Is loving heart of woman given!

Perhaps fair Luna had conspired
With Sol; and that their hearts were fired

With that benignant element,
And sympathetic ardor lent

To making of a perfect day.
For every cloud was tucked away,

Except a few—like curtains hung
About the dome of heaven—strung

As dainty, festooned draperies,
Giving air of sumptuous grace

To some grand, regal banquet hall.
And softly filtering over all,

Fell glory of Sol's radiance—
A king's welcoming cognizance!

Andries, goodman of the house vied
With Sol; Annje, his wife, supplied

That queenly grace, which makes a home
More than a place to which to come.

Preparations in course had been
For many months; and all were in
Expectant state of hearty glee;
And yet, with that solemnity
Which marks the presence of a joy
Borne in on angels' wings—convoy
Of God's best gifts to men, at times
When ring in human hearts the chimes
Of heavenly music, when speaks God's voice,
In sealing some eternal choice.

“Squire” Klaerwater, a family friend,
From Kings-town had come to put an end
To such matters as might deserve
The law's hand, by which to conserve
To youthful twain “rights to possess”
In friendly peace and happiness.
So he his seal and signature
Had fixed to deeds, to make secure
The new home, with lands and other
Gifts, such as father and mother
Only can think of for the child
Of their hearts' love, who has beguiled
Them their affection to divide,
Or to make their hearts' space so wide
As to include that other heart,
Which, to their child, is counterpart.

The wedding-guests, from far and near,
Had planned for well-nigh a whole year
For this event. From Jersey, some;
Manhattan, too; others had come—
And not a few—from Newburgh and
Poughkeepsie; where steamboats which land
Along the Hudson, brought all such
To King's-town Point; then, by stage-coach
Seventeen miles up the old Lime Road;
Stopping anon, to change the load
Of passengers who, with their trunks
Bounded on and off, with big chunks
Of merriment, thrown all about
Like the sunshine, just coming out
In early morn or after a storm,
When Nature wakens in best form.

And long before the time was due,
The country-folk and town-folk, too,
Would gather at the village inn
To meet the stage-coach coming in;
“To get the mail,” some said; but then,
It was quite apparent that, when
The letters all distributed,
That which the mail contributed
Was, for most, far less than the word
Of general gossip they had heard.
The wedding news, of course, would be
Discussed by every family.

The driver gathered reins and whip
And braced his feet, so not to slip;
Chirped his wheel-horses, gave the lash
To the leaders; then, for a dash!

The old stage-coach, like basket hung
On straps of leather, swayed and swung;
And, as they drove, the way along,
Sometimes a jest or snatch of song
Would almost make the company
Think they were on a trip at sea;
Till catching gleam of silver thread,
Where turns the Rondout in its bed
Far in the distance, near the wood,
Or, circling through the meadows strewed
With bleating flocks, like drifts of snow,
And winding herds whose gentle low
Was wafted to them on the breeze,
Whispering through the wayside trees,
They halted on some towering hill
Till every one should drink his fill
Of beauty of that landscape rare—
A garden of the Lord stretched there!
And thus refreshed, onward they went,
Passing ox-teams with wagons, bent
All in one direction; all filled
With happy faces; women frilled
And furbelowed; men stocked and dressed
In fancy waistcoats—all their best;

But much home-spun—home-woven, too;
Showing what Dutch house-wives could do!
And here and there, one well could see
The marks of aristocracy;
Some silken gown, or Paisley shawl,
Or broadcloth coat and breeches—all
Spoke of Britain, France or Holland;
Whence—prized heirlooms from those whose stand
For larger liberty—came more
Than clothes for children to adore!
For it was a glorious truth,
Where parents' mantles fell on youth,
Hearts courageous still strongly held
To principles their lives had spelled!

Bright faces of the little tots,
Like daisies or forget-me-nots
Grown thick amidst a field of green,
Were scattered in each load as seen
Moving toward that place where they
Should celebrate the wedding-day.
The guests had come; and everywhere
Old comrades' greetings and the rare
Recounting of the former days
By some, whose diverse fortunes' ways
Had led them very far apart
From early friends and place of start;
While nearer neighbors talked upon
How stock and crops were coming on.

The colored servants whisked about;
For months they'd turned things inside out.

They said: "Fer dis yere weddin' sure
Wuz mos' glorious thing eber your

Eyes w'u'd see dis side ob glory—
Words c'n neber tell de story!"

Under the trees the feast was spread.
Only the branches overhead

Shut out the vision of the sky,
With its great dome of blue and eye
Of the sun smiling through on all;
While, from the leafage, came the call

Of singing birds, trilling love-song
To answering mates, to whom belong

The family cares in homes near by;
Where, swinging in the branches high,

Patient, expectant motherhood
Was cheered with song and hope of brood.

'Twas something like when rivulets
Of joy break loose and spurting jets

From Love's glad heart mingle their streams
Of soul-felt music, when the dreams

Of life, with power and beauty, come
To fulfillment in "Home, Sweet Home."

Then, as God intended, the truth
Of His love is our life, forsooth;

And two hearts, having found the good
In each, are blessed in parenthood,

Which blesses oft again this earth
By Christ's kingdom in childhood's worth.
Such were the thoughts which stirred the hearts
Of twain, whose own especial parts
In life were making this their day.
Now the Dominie led the way
To where the wedding party, flanked
By loyal negro servants, ranked
According to their household place,
Were circled round the outside space;
While both families, with their kin,
In easy order, waiting in
Two long rows—one on either side—
Formed an aisle for the train of bride
To meet the groom at garden gate,
Where he, in waiting, stood in state.
Dominie Fryenmoet now gave
Quick survey of that fair conclave,
Then, as a signal, dropped a rose.
Like the song of a lark, which grows
With its flight, a sweet childish voice
Softly lifted a mellifluous
Strain whose spreading volume swelled till
All that whole place it seemed to fill.
With a cadence, then, as soft and low
As brush of angels' wings which go
Unseen by mortal eyes, but known
By music of ethereal tone;

Till chorus of happy children,
Scattering roses as they sang,
Gave rapturous voice, in Holland Dutch,
To the twenty-third psalm; so much
The praise of God, the prayer of all,
A benediction and a call
To consecration of all life—
To bride and groom—husband and wife—
A heavenly hush, a holy calm
Filled every heart with God's peace balm!
And there, beneath the heavens blue,
Each plighted other to be true.
Then measured words fell from the lips
Of the Dominie; as dew drips
From the brow of the morning, caught
By the sun and dextrously wrought
Into sweetness and strength for hearts
Of lilies and oak-trees, whose parts
In God's plan, though widely diverse,
Were His; and each lived to disperse
His blessing and glory to man—
Its own way, each; but His, the plan!
Thus, blessings of Heaven besought
The Dominie, asking that nought
Of earth's destroying powers might
Involve the present joy and light
Of this glorious day; whose face
Smiled promise of abundant grace

For future years, secure and blessed
With His leading into Life's best.

Final commitment to God's care
Was voiced by all in our Lord's Prayer;

Benediction and "Amens" said,
Congratulations then were spread

Like sunshine o'er the happy pair;
Who, now attended, led to where

The tables, stretched beneath the trees,
Groaned with weight of delicacies.

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow,"
Till Nature's voice gave back echo,

Their hearts sincere poured gratitude,
As offering of their thanks to God.

Around that board were other friends
Than those whose tie by blood pretends
To claim heart consideration.
Kekaumo, who long held station
As Indian medicine-man, sat
Not far from Petrius' right and at
Left of where Squire Klaerwater,
With his own attractive daughter,
Held a court of conversation
With pleasing edification.
Lifting a glass of water clear,
Turning to spring which bubbled near,
The Indian said: "A toast to you,
In the name of our Mother true!
"This pure, sweet water, gushing forth
From the great heart of Mother Earth,
Is our life, from her heart to ours—
Free coursing of her blood, with powers
To makes our lives as sweet and clean,
As strong and beautiful, as seen
In her sincerity of heart,
Of which this evidence is part!
Sincerity! So heavenly fair,
It's face shines Heaven everywhere!
As the Great Spirit, through the sun,
Reveals Himself to everyone!
Better than gold or jewels rare
That priceless gem! Such glory there

That monarchs might well wish to claim
Its virtues to enrich their fame!

When man or woman finds such soul,
Giving like, happiness is whole!

So, here's to Happiness, good Friends!
Long life to each and both, while bends

The arch of Heaven down to you,
And wee papooses stepping through

Into your wigwam, share that bliss
Which you've found in a world like this:

And I am sure, 'twill not be long
Ere they sing, too, Life's sweetest song!"

THE ALARM

Scarce had the last note of good-will
Been spoken when, o'er the hill,
Came messenger, running with stride
As if the wings of the wind, tied
To his feet, gave desperate speed
To announce some desperate deed.
Straight to Petrius hastened he;
Advised with him most quietly;
Then quickly on again he strode
Through the fields to the old Lime Road.
Katrinje's ears his words had caught—
She pondered well the vexing thought!
An Indian uprising had come
Again to menace peace and home.
The Napanogs had suddenly
Called council at the "Big Pine Tree;"
Where tumbling falls leap o'er high brink
Some four miles back from Wawarssinck.
They planned to have a holiday,
Sweeping with torch along the way
Down the valley, clear to King's-town!
Such was the word the man brought down.
A friendly Indian passed the word
To Abe Bevier; which, when he heard
Saddled his horse and fairly flew
All about Wawarssinck and through
To Kahanesing garrison;
And they had sent the warning on.

Petrius, rising, bowing low
To the Indian, said: "Kekaumo,
Our thanks! We love you as our friend!
We know your heart is true; but bend
Your bow; and, with an arrow dipped
In this same love we know and tipped
With a flint whose strike calls the spark,
Let go straight to the steely mark
Of hearts of other Indians here
Till they glow with like warmth sincere!
That messenger just brought us news
Of a plot to turn fire-brands loose
Throughout our valley beautiful!
Dastardly! We are dutiful
To our homes and families—all!
And to such friends, like you, whose call
To our hearts gives us well to know
That hearts like yours ne'er stoop so low.
As with a stealthy tread and hand
Of death—a fire-destroying band—
Would seek to do despite to those
Who count you brothers, and not foes!
So we reciprocate your toast!
"*Sincerity of heart*"—no boast
Of anything, save just the truth—
Most valiant strength for age and youth;
But, let it here be understood
That should you hold our friendship good
We, on our part, shall call it well;
If not, I can not, just here, tell

What consequence may follow free
Upon the heels of treachery!
If, as we feel, you are our friend,
You will quickly put some fixed end
To such things as this! Do but prove
By quick action, how much that love
You bear us holds of verity—
How much of heart sincerity!
We've always sought to treat you well;
And, if you've aught against us, tell
Us *now* what ling'ring grievance lurks
To give place and power to such works
As this we hear about! If friends,
The spirit of our love transcends
Such ignorance and malice mad,
Whose eyes are blind, whose heart is bad!
If we be men who cherish right,
Let the Great Spirit be our light!
Let peace between our peoples dwell,
And here make Heaven—not a Hell!
Brother, eat, drink and haste away
And ne'er stop till you stoutly stay
This murderous scheme! But, ere you go,
Let your blood with mine swear that no
Red man's heart shall e'er burn with hate
Toward us, who on our part wait
Only to show you fellowship,
With heart as well as word of lip!"

THE COVENANT

“Petrius, brothers sworn are we!
Kekaumo’s heart speaks: ‘If need be,
Kekaumo’s heart will give its blood
And stop its beat to turn the flood
Of any evil that may come
To you or yours, or to that home
Which you and your fair bride, this day,
Are setting up along Life’s way!
I go; and you need have no fear
That a red man will e’er come near
With fire or deed of deadly harm!
Kekaumo has a strong right arm!
Kekaumo is medicine-man!
Kekaumo speaks so winds’ ears can
Catch his words and carry them on
Till every red man’s heart takes down
The message that Kekaumo gives—
And there is not the Indian lives
Who will not lift his face to Sun
And bow his head and say, ‘ ’Tis done!’
Let nothing mar your wedding-feast!
Farewell! May every day, at least,
Bring you that joy and sweet content
Which from Kekaumo’s heart are sent!
Farewell!’ ” The Indian mounted steed;
And, far away, the hastening speed
Of echoed hoof-beats sounded faint,
As though “Farewell!” were prayed by saint!

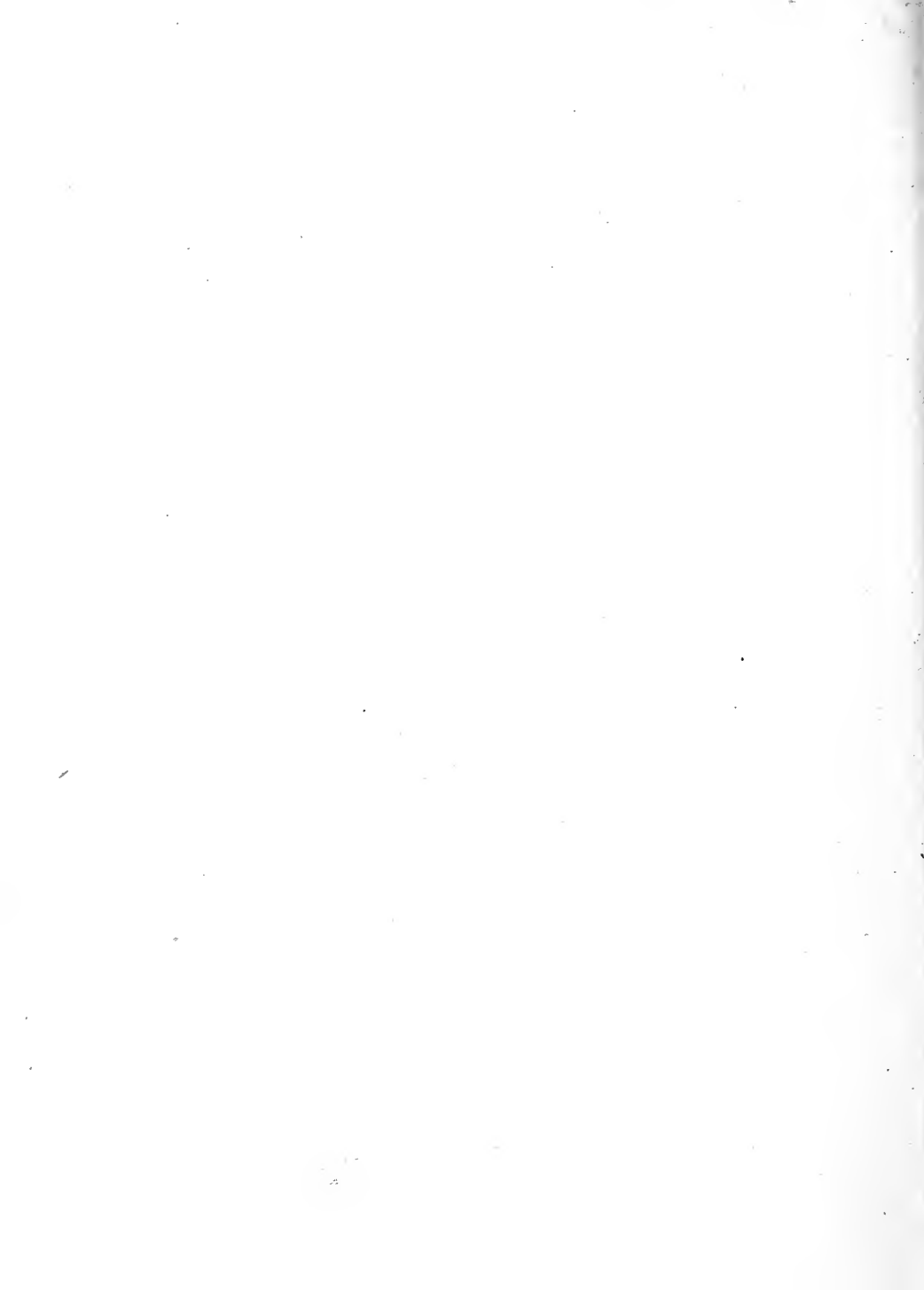
FULFILMENT

And such Kekaumo was, that day—
A saint indeed, in earthly clay,
Whose spirit, with its power, dwelt
Where need could reach when need was felt!
And thus the wedding-feast progressed
In peaceful valley, undistressed
As evidence of truth in toast
Kekaumo proffered to his host,
Upon his wedding-day with her—
Katrinje—there at Rochester!
Whate'er calamity befell
Other hamlets, truth 'tis to tell
That Rochester ne'er shared such fate
As fire or death through Indian hate.

Petrius and Katrinje long
Abode at their new home, where song
Of love with daily toil was blent;
And oft their little children spent
Their happiest hours in listening
To that old story once again,
About Kekaumo, doctor-man,
Who gave such good heart medicine
That all disease of red man's hate
Was sure to quickly dissipate!
And later still, on Grandpa's knee
Or huddled round, attentively,

Little heads—a dozen or more—
Would bob and say, "One more before
We go to bed, grandpa! That one
About the Indian man—the one
Who gave toast to Grandma and you,
Then made his wishes all come true!"







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